

EXPEDITED Plan Review

Newsletter

Department of Public Works and Environmental Services

www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/dem

New Training Option Offered

To keep Peer Reviewers informed on the ever changing world of the building code and to provide another level of training, the Office of Building Code Services is offering an in-house training program. Consider the program, *plan reviewer for a day*.

Quite simply, the program allows a Peer Reviewer to join County staff for a day to see how plan reviewers tackle a set of drawings. However, there is one catch! The plan reviewer will review a set of drawings that the Peer Reviewer has already approved under the *Expedited Building Plan Review Program*. In addition to working side-by-side with a County plan reviewer, the Peer Reviewer will also have the ability to see how the Building Plan Review Division operates.

The program requires coordination between County staff and the Peer Reviewer. For Peer Reviewers approved in more than one discipline, multiple, same-day reviews can be accommodated with careful scheduling.

The program was first offered to a Peer Reviewer on a pilot program basis in November. During a regular eight hour day, the Peer Reviewer sat down with a mechanical, electrical and plumbing plan reviewer. The plan reviewers conducted their review as normal, and explained any additional design deficiencies that were found.

If any Peer Reviewers are interested in participating in the program, please contact Brian Foley at 703-324-1960 or brian.foley@co.fairfax.va.us. Prospective participants must have a set of drawings ready for County review.

Accessibility

Officials from the Office of Building Code Services have recently clarified their policy towards the conflicts between the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and the accessibility provisions of the BOCA National Building Code and CABO/ANSI A117.1. To achieve this clarification, the

County requested a code interpretation from the state Technical Review

The clarified policy targets alterations to existing buildings. While it is quite obvious that all new construction must meet the accessibility provisions of the BOCA code and the CABO/ANSI standard, when and how to apply the technical requirements to alterations is not. Listed below are highlights of the code requirements and County policy.

- All new construction associated with an alteration within an existing building must meet the provisions of the BOCA code and the CABO/ANSI standard.
- A cost limitation of 20% of the cost of the alterations (including mechanical, electrical, and plumbing costs) must be spent to upgrade the accessible route (this includes the restrooms and drinking fountains serving the altered area).
- Priority shall be given to providing the building with an accessible entrance and upgrading the restrooms to meet accessibility requirements of the BOCA code and the CABO/ANSI standard. See below for restroom alteration options.
- If installing a wheelchair-accessible stall in the restrooms is technically infeasible and the number of stalls cannot be reduced per the plumbing code (i.e., requires the removal or alteration of a structural member that is an essential part of the structural frame), then a 4 ft. alternate toilet stall OR a unisex toilet room on the same floor as the alterations, may be installed.
- If opting to install a unisex toilet room, its installation must be completed regardless of the associated 20% cost limitation.
- If the existing building was constructed prior to 1997, AND it fully meets the

requirements of the ADAAG for standard stalls, then the existing stalls are not required to be upgraded.

- If the building was previously upgraded prior to 1997 to install a standard or alternate toilet stall or a single user toilet room in accordance with the ADAAG, then the existing stalls or toilet room are not required to be upgraded.

For more information regarding Fairfax County's policy concerning accessibility, please contact Brian Foley at 703-324-1960 or brian.foley@co.fairfax.va.us. A new public brochure entitled *Accessibility Fundamentals* is forthcoming. When completed, it will be available at the County public counters and on the DPWES website (see the address noted above).

Re-certification from BOCA

Please take note: BOCA certification is required to be maintained. BOCA requires all individuals who hold valid certifications to participate in continuing education activities in order to keep certifications current. Renewal is required every three years with 1.5 continuing education units (CEU) for each certification held; however, if three or more certifications are held, then a maximum of 4.5 CEUs is required.

Criteria for BOCA approved CEUs can be found on the attached sheet. Peer Reviewers who fail to maintain their BOCA certification will be suspended from the *Expedited Building Plan Review Program* until such time as the certification is renewed. For more information about certifications, please contact Lynnette Fulce at BOCA International, Inc. at 708-799-2300, ext. 334.

Turnaround Times

The average turnaround times for the Building Plan Review Division between August 1, 1999 and December 1, 1999 are as follows:

New Construction

Average days* for 1st submission	19
Average days* for corrections.....	6
Average days* for revisions.....	5
Number of County reviews prior to plan approval	3

Tenant Layouts

Average days* for 1st submission	7
Average days* for corrections.....	5
Average days* for revisions.....	5
Number of County reviews prior to plan approval	2

* working days

For more detailed information, see the attached sheet.

Code Interpretation

Formal Code Interpretation:9/1103/98
BOCA National Building Code/1996 Sections 1103.1 and 1103.2

Question No. 1: Are sinks that are provided in areas other than toilet rooms and kitchens required to be accessible?

Answer No. 1: Yes.

Comment No. 1: Section 1103.1 states that all structures are required to be fully accessible unless specifically exempted. While Section 1108.2 provides specific requirements for toilet and bathing facilities, it does not address individual sinks in other building locations. The intent of Chapter 11 is to require buildings and structures, including all of their associated sites and facilities, to be fully accessible to persons with physical disabilities unless specifically exempted.

Question No. 2: Do the accessible sink provisions of referenced standard CABO A117.1, Section 4.20.3.2 address a parallel side approach?

Answer No. 2: No.

Comment No. 2: The provisions of Section 4.20 and specifically Section 4.20.3.2 and Figure B4.20.3.2 are based only upon a forward frontal approach to a lavatory or sink. These requirements are utilized predominantly for lavatories in toilet and bathing facilities. However, Sections 4.2.4, 4.2.5 and 4.2.6 do provide criteria for clear floor space and reach requirements which may be a viable option for sinks which are not located in toilet rooms and dwelling unit kitchens. Such an alternative would have to

be approved by the code official in accordance with Section 106.4. It should be noted that Section 606.2 of the 1998 edition of referenced standard ICC/ANSI A117.1 now provides an exception for parallel side approaches for kitchen sinks "where a cook top or conventional range is not provided."

Code Tips

Peer Reviewers must ensure the items listed below are addressed on the construction documents, if applicable. Many of these items are missed by designers and usually found during the plan review stage.

Building

- High density filing systems: large filing cabinets, movable or sliding filing shelves, etc. usually have a live load greater than that for an office use. Therefore, a structural review of the floor system is required to ensure floor members are capable of resisting the addition load. The structural calculations must be attached to the County set of drawings. **TIP:** In many instances, the filing systems will only be shown on the furniture plan.

- Floor assemblies which may not require a fire resistance rating per Table 602, but support a rated stair or shaft enclosure must have a rating equal to that of the shaft enclosure. This includes the floor beam supporting the shaft, the girder which supports the joist, and the corresponding columns and/or bearing wall.

- Rated wall assemblies are required for elevator equipment rooms with a fire resistance rating equal to that of the elevator shaft.

- One-hour wall assemblies are required for generator rooms which are located within the footprint of the building and contain no fuel. (Rooms which also contain fuel may require up to a 4-hour assembly depending on the amount of fuel stored.)

Mechanical

- Sufficient outside air ventilation is required to be provided for assembly occupancies (e.g., conference rooms).

- Smoke control calculations for an atrium exhaust system must be applied correctly. **TIP:** This can be a confusing task. For more information, please contact Roger O'Donoghue at 703-324-1645.

- The common ventilation system equation must be properly applied.

- Testing information, per UL710, must be provided for kitchen exhaust systems.

Electrical

- All three-phase transformers must have overcurrent protection on the secondary side for protection of the conductors. (See Article 240-3.)

Plumbing

- Per the Fairfax County Office of Waste Management, the condensate line for mechanical systems cannot drain into a sanitary sewer line.

- Site plans and plumbing drawings must be coordinated in terms of utilities (sewers, drains, water service).

VUSBC Info

The Board of Housing met in Richmond recently to discuss the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code and its future. Informed sources suggest that the preferred course of action is as follows:

- Proceed with the current process to revise the 1996 USBC. This would maintain the state's use of the 1996 BOCA National Building Code, 1995 (w/1996 revisions) International Plumbing Code (IPC), 1996 International Mechanical Code (IMC), and the 1996 National Electrical Code (NEC).

- Study the possibility of adopting a 2001 USBC to go into effect in 2002 with a one year grace period until 2003. This new code would adopt the 2000 International Building Code, 2000 IPC, 2000 IMC, and 1999 NEC.

Website Update

The OBCS website was recently updated to add the *Special Inspections Manual* (free of charge online, \$4.95 at the County) and a new publication entitled *Commercial Structures*. Coming soon will be the new *Accessibility Fundamentals* brochure and a new homepage for the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services.

New Peer Reviewers

Congratulations to the newest Peer Reviewers, **Andre Santiago** of HSMM, Inc. and **Ken Smith** of KT Associates. Welcome to the program!